

renumber new claims 12-30 presented in the Preliminary Amendment as new claims 13-31.

Applicants also request that the dependencies of new claims 12-30 be amended to reflect the changes in the renumbering of the new claims.

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In addition, Applicants also request that the amendments to claims 12-14 presented in the Preliminary Amendment dated January 31, 2000 be amended to correspond with the above requested changes. Specifically, the amendments for claims 12-14 should be renumbered to claims 13-15 and the dependencies of these claims should also be corrected.

Thus, to review the prosecution history of the present application, Applicants wish to note as follows.

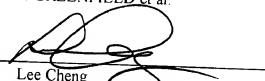
In the original specification forwarded from the International Bureau, claims 1-12 were pending. In the Applicants' Preliminary Amendment dated September 21, 1998, original claims 1-11 were cancelled without prejudice and substituted with new claims 13-31. Further, new claims 13-15 were further amended in Applicants' Preliminary Amendment dated January 31, 2000. Lastly, original claim 12 has now been cancelled in this Preliminary Amendment.

As a result, the current pending claims are claims 13-31 which the Examiner is respectfully requested to favorably examine on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

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August 31, 2000